

a substantially horizontal surface including at least a section capable of supporting said plurality of hand-held objects, said section having no predefined positions for supporting said plurality of hand-held objects;

a detecting element proximate to at least said section of said surface;

a first processor linked to said detecting element;

a personal computer, including:

a loading device for loading executable code into said personal computer from an outside source;

a storage device for storing the executable code;

a second processor for processing at least the executable code, and

an output device for presenting a user interface;

a component (within) said hand-held objects capable of affecting an electrical change in at least a portion of said detecting element;

at least one of said first and second processors being capable of identifying at least one of: (a) said visual aspect of said hand-held object as a result of said electrical change, and (b) a position of said hand-held object on said surface.

52. A computer system comprising:

a plurality of hand-held objects, an object of said plurality of hand-held objects having a unique visual aspect and a component exhibiting a characteristic representing said visual aspect;

a substantially horizontal surface including at least a section capable of supporting said plurality of hand-held objects, said section having no predefined positions for supporting said plurality of hand-held objects;

a detecting element provided proximate to at least said section of said surface, at least a portion of said detecting element being capable of detecting said characteristic of said component;

a first processor capable of encoding information related to at least one of: (a) said detected characteristic and (b) a position of said hand-held object into a message compatible with a personal computer communication protocol;

F² a second processor capable of receiving the encoded information and recognizing at least one of: (a) said visual aspect of said hand-held object as a result of said detected characteristic, and (b) a position of said hand-held object on said surface.

F³ 58. A computer system as recited in claim 49, further comprising a communication link facilitating communication between the first and second processors.

F⁴ 67. A computer system as recited in claim 52, further comprising a communication link facilitating communication between the first and second processors.
